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SUBJ/PUBLIC AFFAIRS-NAVAL SERVICE MEDICAL NEWS (NSMN) (95-35)//
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RMKS/1. THIS SERVICE IS FOR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION AND NEWS OF INTEREST TO NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEMBERS, CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES, FAMILY MEMBERS AND RETIRED BENEFICIARIES OF NAVY MEDICINE. MAXIMUM AND TIMELY REDISTRIBUTION OR FURTHER REPRODUCTION AND USE BY ACTION ADDRESSEES IS ENCOURAGED. THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN COORDINATED WITH THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS (CMC). THE COMMANDANT HAS AUTHORIZED TRANSMISSION TO MARINE CORPS ACTIVITIES.

2. HEADLINES AND GENERAL INTEREST STORIES THIS WEEK:
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HEADLINE: Changing Times to Serve You Better

BUMED Washington (NSMN) -- A common practice for clinics before Total Quality Leadership's focus on the customer was to schedule appointments in blocks, with more patients per block than could be seen by the physician. This allowed for cancellations and no-shows and ensured efficient use of the physician's time. It also meant long waits for patients, especially if everyone showed up.

The Navy Medical Department wants to get the word out that this type of scheduling, sometimes referred to as gang appointments, is only acceptable for immunizations, medical and dental screening, group teaching programs and accession points. The patient, whom Navy health care providers serve, is the customer, and the standard for appointments in Navy treatment facilities is to ensure that each customer in non-emergency circumstances waits 30 minutes or less for that service.

Continuous improvement is a catch-phrase of Total Quality Leadership and a goal for Navy medicine. Reducing office waiting times is an improvement everyone can appreciate.

-USN-

HEADLINE: 'Unspoken Bond' Salutes a Special Relationship

NNMC Bethesda, MD (NSMN) -- The human condition, with all its strengths and frailties, was brought to life Saturday, 2 September, at the National Naval Medical Center, with the unveiling of the "Unspoken Bond," a sculpture that depicts the bond between Navy corpsmen and the Marine Forces with whom they serve.

The statue, which shows a Navy corpsman dragging a World War II Marine to safety, was the result of a unique collaboration between Canadian sculptor Peter Wilde and Dr. William H. Laing, who commissioned the piece.

Laing, a former Navy pharmacist's mate who served in the Pacific during World War II and who took part in the campaign for Guadalcanal, commissioned the statue because there were no such commemorations of corpsmen in Washington, DC.

The statue's inscription reads: "This memorial is dedicated to the hospital corpsmen who served with the Marines in the Pacific during World War II. 'Doc' was that special comrade who pulled them to safety, patched their wounds, and shared their foxholes. Established in war and ennobled in peace, this bond will always endure."

"This is a fitting tribute to a forgotten group of men who saved at least 97 percent of the wounded in the Pacific," Laing said. "It is a long overdue tribute to a group of people whose aim was not killing but saving lives."

The keynote speaker for the statue dedication was LtGen George R. Christmas, USMC, deputy chief of staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Headquarters Marine Corps. He took the audience of nearly 400 on a guided tour of the corpsman's role in this nation's conflicts. "I stand before you today because of Navy medicine," said Christmas, who received the Navy Cross when he was seriously wounded during the 1968 Tet Offensive in the Battle for Hue city. "I stand before you because of the physical embrace corpsmen bring to the battlefield. ... From us who serve today and those who served in the past, I salute you, the Navy corpsman. And someday again the call will go out, 'Corpsman Up!' and once again, we as a nation, must be prepared to do what corpsmen have done since 1775."

Condensed from a story by JO3 Kevin Briscoe, NNMC Bethesda

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HEADLINE: Suicide Prevention Needs Everyone's Involvement
BUPERS Washington (NSMN) -- The death of a shipmate by suicide is a particularly tragic loss. Everyone can potentially intervene to get someone help if they know the signs of suicide risk.

The Navywide suicide database is maintained at the Bureau of Naval Personnel as part of the Navy's Health Promotion Program. For calendar years 1993 through 1995, Sailors who completed suicide were mostly male, Caucasian, under age 30 and stationed ashore within CONUS. These characteristics closely match the Navy demographics. However, more than 60 percent were petty officers, and of those petty officers, most were E-6. At the time of death, most had intense feelings over a relationship breakdown or recent legal or disciplinary action. Most often

they killed themselves with a personally owned weapon in a familiar setting, such as a home or barracks, while on liberty or unauthorized absence.

In more than half of the instances they had been drinking, and often the drinking was in a social setting with friends. Friends and family were aware of the intense mood, increased alcohol use, verbal statements of self-harm, access to a weapon, and even observed potentially lethal acts in more than 80 percent of the suicides. However, the individual's chain of command or medical care providers were made aware of the existing signs in less than 50 percent of the cases.

Getting those who see the signs to report them is a key element to improving the Navy suicide prevention effort. By keeping up-to-date on suicide characteristics, medical providers are in a unique position to look for warning signs as well as educate others of these signs during patient contacts.

For more information contact BUPERS, PERS-601B, LCDR P. Anjeski, MSC, at DSN 224-5746 or (703) 614-5746.

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HEADLINE: OJT Enhances Careers at Naval Hospital 29 Palms

NAVHOSP Twentynine Palms, CA (NSMN) -- HM3 Robert Barton of the Radiology Department can attest to the success of On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms -- he completed the OJT program here, went on to the year-long Advanced Xray Technician school, and has just returned to the hospital after graduating from the school.

"The school will really help me in advancing my career," said Barton. "The program here at the hospital really helps set us up for success in school and in our field of medicine," he added.

Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms has certified OJT programs not only in the Radiology Department, but in the Optometry, Pharmacy and Physical Therapy Departments as well. The hospital here is only one of four in the Navy to have a certified OJT program for corpsmen in radiology.

According to CDR William Harris, MSC, director, Ancillary Services at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms, "Not just anybody can get into one of our OJT programs. Corpsmen wishing to train in one of the OJT programs must submit a request chit and generally meet three criteria." Those criteria include: Be interested in pursuing the requested field and meeting the basic requirements for the advanced school; have a good record and excellent evaluations while at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms. Harris emphasizes the OJT program is a reward for hard work. Individuals must also have at least one year remaining on their tour of duty at the hospital.

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HEADLINE: New Uniform Season is Coming -- Make Sure You're Ready

NDW Washington (NSMN) -- If you're transferring or traveling during October, make sure you wear the right uniforms. Naval base commanders in Norfolk; San Diego; Washington, DC; and Seattle have set dates for the shift to winter uniforms in those

regional areas.

In Norfolk and the surrounding Hampton Roads area, the shift will take place on Monday, 30 October. The uniform shift in San Diego will take place on Monday, 23 October. In the Seattle area, the shift occurs on Monday, 2 October. In all three areas, the prescribed Uniform of the Day for officers and chiefs is Service Dress Blue. The alternate is Winter Blue or Summer Khaki. For petty officers and junior Sailors, Service Dress Blue is the prescribed uniform and Winter Blue is the alternate.

Naval District Washington shifts to winter uniforms on Monday, 2 October. Winter Blue and Summer Khaki are not authorized for wear by officers and chiefs inside the Capital Beltway.

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HEADLINE: HEALTHWATCH: The Importance of Your Liver

USNH Yokosuka, Japan (NSMN) -- Have you ever noticed the reaction the word "liver" evokes in people during a conversation? Noses wrinkle, faces distort, and the next thing you hear is "yuck."

While most people think of the liver as a culinary oddity, medical professionals know it for what it really is: The largest and one of the most important internal organs of the body. It performs an enormous amount of jobs on a continuous basis to fine-tune our bodies' health. Losing or damaging even one of these functions can cause severe disease or even death.

The liver weighs about three pounds and is nestled under the ribs for protection. It's made of specialized cells, spaces and canal structures that give it a sponge-like quality. It holds and processes a large volume of blood at any given time, allowing it to continuously give us energy by carrying, storing and producing important nutrients. It metabolizes poisons (such as alcohol) into harmless substances and prepares waste products to be carried away from the body.

One of the truly unique qualities of the liver is its ability to regenerate itself. A portion of the liver can be removed surgically and it will, eventually, replace itself and its functions. This ability makes it one of the most needed donor organs. According to Dr. Colombani, pediatric surgeon at Johns Hopkins Children's Center, "Only a segment from an adult liver replaces the child's entire diseased organ. The transplanted segment then regenerates into a whole organ."

The liver is not indestructible, however. It can be permanently damaged by many things, including disease, drug use, and excessive alcohol intake. For instance, a disease that causes structural changes in the liver is called cirrhosis. Two of the most common causes of cirrhosis are alcohol use and viral hepatitis.

Cirrhosis develops when the liver is asked to do more than its share of work. The stress of constantly trying to neutralize poisons like alcohol, illegal drugs and infection causes fatty deposits to form in the liver. These structural changes force the blood, carrying poisons as well as nutrients, to bypass the important jobs of the liver. Left untreated, cirrhosis will

eventually cause death.

Another cause of cirrhosis is hepatitis or infection of the liver. There are five types of hepatitis known today: A, B, C, D and E. Current research suggests additional types of hepatitis.

Hepatitis A and E are infections commonly found in children, daycare workers and international travelers. They are transmitted through contaminated food, water and close physical contact with another infected person. Once you suffer this type of infection you automatically become immune. Common sense when traveling and good handwashing habits are important in preventing these types of infection.

Hepatitis B and C, however, cause liver cancer and are not as easy to prevent. Hepatitis D is less common, and requires the presence of a chronic infection with hepatitis B to survive. These viruses are transmitted through body fluids, in ways similar to the HIV virus: sexual contact, contaminated needles used for drugs, piercing (including ears), tattooing and virtually any behavior that exposes you to blood. Health care workers are particularly susceptible to hepatitis B and are routinely vaccinated against this disease. They also use something called "universal precautions," where they treat everyone as though they have the disease and wear appropriate protection such as gowns, gloves and masks.

As you can see, most diseases of the liver are preventable. Avoiding excessive alcohol intake is one of the easiest ways to keep your liver healthy. Unfortunately, statistics show the use of alcohol is increasing sharply in the youth of America. The time is now to educate our kids against bad habits, and one great way is by avoiding them ourselves.

Story by LT S. Jarvis, NC, U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka

EDITORS NOTE: October is National Liver Awareness Month.

According to the American Liver Foundation, approximately 27,000 Americans die each year from liver diseases, the fourth leading disease-related cause of death for 25-59 years old.

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HEADLINE: Navy Medical Department People Involved in Operations BUMED Washington (NSMN) -- The Navy Medical Department continues to support the Navy and Marine Corps team through deployments with the fleet and humanitarian operations. Here is the latest update on where our medical people are on assignment.

Medical forces currently on operational assignment are:

Operation Sea Signal Phase V

Medical/Dental augmentation personnel: 245

The Navy Medical Department is in full support of Operation Sea Signal. Approximately 53 medical personnel are deployed to augment U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, providing medical treatment for approximately 11,500 Haitian and Cuban migrants, in addition to providing medical support to many afloat platforms. Additionally, 192 medical and dental personnel are assigned to CJTF 160. They have assumed the mission from the Air Force Air Transportable Hospital for the care and support of the Cuban and Haitian migrants.

Operation Full Accounting

Navy Medical Corps officers and Independent Duty Corpsmen are supporting this operation by volunteering to serve tours ranging from just under two weeks to two months to support the teams searching for remains of MIAs and POWs in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Current missions involve Independent Duty Corpsmen from Naval Hospital Great Lakes, IL, and Naval Medical Clinic Pearl Harbor.

Exercise Support

Surgical Team Five from Naval Medical Center Oakland, CA, is providing medical support for a WESTPAC exercise on board USS New Orleans (LPH 11). Team Five will stand-down upon completion of their mission with our thanks from Navy medicine. Naval Hospital Bremerton, WA, has replaced Oakland as the new home for Mobile Medical Augmentation Readiness Team (MMART) Five.

Surgical Team Four from National Naval Medical Center Bethesda, MD, is deployed to provide support for a Mediterranean ARG.

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3. October calendar of events:

Child Health Month -- American Academy of Pediatrics, (708) 981-7871

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month -- Project Coordinator, National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, c/o Foresight Communications, P.O. Box 57424, Washington, DC 20036

National Dental Hygiene Month -- American Dental Hygienists Association, Public Relations, 444 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 3400, Chicago, IL 60611

Family Health Month -- 1 800 274-2237

National Family Sexuality Education Month -- Planned Parenthood Federation of America, (212) 541-7800

National Liver Awareness Month -- 1 800 223-0179

National Physical Therapy Month -- (703) 706-3218

Lupus Awareness Month -- 1 800 558-0121 or (301) 670-9292

March of Dimes Campaign for Healthier Babies Month -- (914) 997-4622

National Disability Employment Awareness Month -- (703) 641-2704

1-7 October: National Health Care Food Service Week -- (312) 422-3840

1-7 October: National Materials Management Week -- (312) 422-3840

1-7 October: Mental Illness Awareness Week -- (202) 682-6220

1-7 October: Nuclear Medicine Week

1-7 October: National Respiratory Care Week -- (214) 243-2272

8 October: National Children's Day

8-14 October: National Allied Health Week -- (202) 293-4848

10-13 October: National Medical Staff Services Professionals' Week -- (615) 531-3571

13 October 1775: U.S. Navy Birthday

15-21 October: National Week Without Violence -- YWCA

15-21 October: National Veterinary Technician Week -- (317)
742-2216

16-20 October: National Infection Control Week -- (202) 296-
2742

16-20 October: National Medical Assistants' Week -- (312)
899-1500

18 October: National Medical Assistants' Day

16-21 October: National Patient Account Management Week --
(202) 857-1179

19 October: National Mammography Day -- American Cancer
Society, 1 800 ACS-2345; Y-ME, 1 800-221-2141; Susan G. Komen
Breast Cancer Foundation, 1 800 IM AWARE

22-28 October: National Adult Immunization Awareness Week
-- (301) 656-0003

22-28 October: National Healthcare Quality Week -- (708)
966-9392

22-28 October: National Pharmacy Week -- (202) 429-7558

22-29 October: Hepatitis Awareness Week -- 1 800 223-0179

23-29 October: National Pastoral Care Week -- (314) 965-
9917, ext. 1395

23-31 October: National Red Ribbon Week, celebrating
health, drug-free lifestyles -- (314) 845-1933

29 October, 0200: Daylight-Saving Time Ends, Return to
Standard Time -- turn clocks back one hour

31 October - 6 November: National Diabetes Education Week
-- 1 800 338-DMED

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4. ADDRESSEES ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT INFORMATION AND NEWS
ITEMS OF MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OR BENEFICIARY INTEREST (IN STORY
FORMAT) BY TELEPHONE, FAX OR E-MAIL TO BUMED, ATTN: NAVAL
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